



For immediate release

IDOC and SSA Assist Offenders on Path to Re-entry

Indianapolis, IN (March 24, 2011) – On March, 18, 2011, the Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC) and the Social Security Administration (SSA) entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that will enable offenders within 120 days of release to obtain a replacement Social Security Card.

Discussions regarding the MOU began months ago with the understanding by both agencies that one of the many challenges facing offenders upon their reentry into a local community is obtaining proper identification. By allowing offenders the opportunity to obtain this vital piece of identification, the IDOC and SSA are making offender re-entry in Indiana a process with one less barrier to overcome as offenders attempt to obtain employment and utilize community resources.

Under the new MOU, each prison operated by the IDOC will now have the ability to process eligible inmates for replacement social security cards. Indiana releases over 19,000 offenders per year. With this MOU, as well as the MOU with the BMV to assist in obtaining State Identification Cards, Indiana offenders will have fewer hurdles in obtaining employment and other community services available upon their release.

IDOC Commissioner Bruce Lemmon commented, "Thanks to active partnerships between our Department and other state agencies, such as SSA, Indiana is able to offer more enhanced and efficient services to offenders returning to our communities. These services alone can make a significant impact on their chances at a successful re-entry."

Terry Belanger, SSA Director for Indiana, added, "The greatest challenge for this population upon release is finding gainful employment. This Memorandum of Understanding removes one of the chief obstacles to their successful transition into the Indiana workforce."

With the support of Governor Daniels and the re-entry initiatives in place under IDOC Commissioner Lemmon, Indiana continues to lead the nation with innovative approaches and solutions to the challenges facing offenders upon release.

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